Prescott National Forest Plan

Amendment 14

To the 2004 republished version (V1.1) of the 1986 Forest Plan, as amended

Visual Quality Objectives
Drake Cement Limestone Quarry Project

May 26, 2006

Visual Quality

Visual quality levels as inventoried and mapped serve as the visual quality objectives (VQOs) for the forest.

Table 7. Visual quality objectives

VQO	Current Acres	Amended Acres
Preservation	132,401	n/a
Retention	52,466	52,458
Partial Retention	210,069	210,006
Modification	637,961	638,032
Maximum Modification	229,902	n/a

Analyze each project in the field to determine if the elements and levels that comprise the existing VQOs are accurate and reflect current conditions and uses. Raise VQOs to the next higher scenic level if appropriate, and determine if this new VQO level reflects increased or anticipated public use and/or future management intentions for the area. Changes to inventoried VQOs require project-level NEPA analysis and a decision by the forest supervisor. The changes will be mapped and tracked for trend assessment during the first decade of Forest Plan implementation **(see attached Map)**.

In ponderosa pine foregrounds, manage for diversity varying from openings to multistoried stands, with some overmature yellow-bark ponderosa pine trees in open, park-like stands. Group selection within the front 200 feet of the foreground should not exceed 1 acre and the shapes should be designed to achieve the characteristics of natural openings.

In retention and partial retention VQO middle ground and background distance zones, create or maintain a diversified texture of the forested landscape in relation to the existing landscape character type. All improvements, permanent structures, vegetation manipulation, ground disturbing activities and/or construction will be compatible with the visual quality objective for the area.

By the end of the second decade (1996-2005), develop viewshed corridor implementation plans for all high-use areas, water bodies, primary travel routes and all secondary routes where three-quarters of the users have major concern for scenic qualities.

Conduct vegetation management planning for visual quality to enhance and assist in long-term survival of aspen stands and other interesting vegetation features. Implementation would occur after analysis of applicable environmental factors is performed.

Complete visual absorption capability and existing visual condition mapping for the forest by the end of the first decade (1986-1995).

By the end of the fist decade (1986-1995), inventory and list in priority order all areas not meeting VQOs that need rehabilitation.

Manage developed recreation site perimeters (within 330 feet) for the visual quality objective of retention.

Design and construct improvements and permanent structures in foreground areas with natural appearing materials. Improvement, permanent structures, vegetation manipulation and ground disturbing activities will be compatible with the natural landscape.

Place timber markings on the side opposite the viewer along all roads and travel ways were practical.

In mixed conifer foregrounds, maintain a variety of species, age classes and size classes through the use of various silvicultural prescriptions and stand marking guides.

Dispose of all activity slash in the first 200 feet of Sensitivity Level 1 foregrounds.

In pinyon/juniper foregrounds, retain or create diversity in pinyon/juniper stands by emphasizing open stands of mature trees (12 inches DBH or more) with a variety of other size classes. A minimum of 40 percent of the existing canopy should be retained. Openings and cutting practices should be compatible with visual quality other objectives identified in the project environmental analysis.

Retain a mix of noncommercial species (oak, locust, etc.) in foreground areas, whenever these species are present.